

My name is Barry Elkin, I live at 57 Skyline Drive in Acton. I am also a Resident Advisor to the Quail Ridge Board of Directors. I opposed to this project.

I am here to speak about the wetlands related issues associated with this proposed project. The relevant interests that you, the Commission, are charged with protecting are public water supplies, flood control (i.e., the dam associated with this site), protection of wildlife habitat, groundwater supplies, storm damage prevention, and prevention of pollution.

I remain concern that much of the woodland surrounding this project will be removed. In order for the solar panels to receive sunlight, they must have a clear view of the sun. That means that many trees will be cut beyond the solar panel footprint. Clear-cutting of trees impacts the environment and will have a detrimental impact on the values that you, the Commission, are required to protect.

Engineering drawings indicate construction to be within 400 ' of Nagog Pond. No work should be allowed that is contrary to state law.

Wildlife habitat will be effectively destroyed through this project. Habitat presently exists around the pond perimeter, where the proposed building expansion exists, and where the proposed solar panels are to be installed, as well as where the additional trees that will need to be cut are located. This is a fragile ecosystem and clear-cutting and building will destroy wildlife habitat.

I am concerned that there will be an impact on the water quality of the public water supply through this project. Increased runoff will be allowed to go into the pond because there is less natural vegetation to protect the pond from pollution and runoff.

I am concerned with the dam and flood control when you cut so many trees and build so many structures on a previously natural site.

I am concerned that the solar array won't be able to work without extensive clear-cutting of neighboring trees outside of the proposed plan before you. The solar panels must receive sunlight to be effective. I am opposed to clear-cutting to benefit these panels.

I am opposed to Acton waving any setback requirements, and other provisions of its Wetlands Bylaw and Rules and Regulations, in order to accommodate this project. I don't believe that the applicant has demonstrated the necessary legal reasoning to qualify for waivers. And waivers will only harm the environment.

Since solar panels are not required to run this project, I believe that there are other, more non-intrusive ways to operate any plant at this site. Solar is not a necessity, and is in fact detrimental to the site because of the impact on the wetlands and the fact that they will mostly be built within the wetlands buffer zone.

I am concerned with the traffic necessary to construct and operate this facility on an ongoing basis, and especially concerned with the hazardous waste and other materials that could flow from the trucks into the wetlands and surrounding environment.

I also am concerned with the noise that this project will generate, and its impact on the wildlife and wildlife habitat.

Finally, I am concerned that there is no public benefit to Acton from this project. Concord gains a water supply, while we receive a net loss – we lose protection of the pond's bank, we lose protection of the stream, we lose significant and well-established vegetation in the 100-foot buffer zone, and we lose the benefits of beautiful trees and protected open space.